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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 05 ANKARA 001739

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR PRM/ANE, EUR/SE, NEA/NGA, IO AND SA/PAB
NSC FOR DWORREN, MANN, KHALILZAD, QUANRUD AND BRYZA
DEPT PASS USAID FOR NATSIOS; DCHA/OFDA FOR GARVELINK,
MCCONNELL, MARX, AND FARNSWORTH; ANE/AA FOR CHAMBERLAIN;
USAID/A, DCHA/AA,
DCHA/RMT, DCHA/OFDA, DCHA/FFP, DCHA/OTI, DCHA/DG, ANE/AA
AND USAID/AA
ROME FOR FODOG; GENEVA FOR RMA AND NKYLOH
EUCOM FOR J3, J5, SOJ7 AND POLAD
CENTCOM FOR J3, J5 AND POLAD
PACOM FOR POLAD
GENEVA FOR RMA

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SUBJECT: DART: UNICEF'S TAKE ON HUMANITARIAN NEEDS IN
NORTHERN IRAQ

Classified by DART Information Officer for
Reasons 1.5(B) and (D).

This cable was draft by Disaster Assistance Response
Team (DART) Field Office/North and cleared by Embassy
Ankara.

This is an action cable; please see paragraph 9.

Summary

1. (C) On March 13, DART Field Office/North personnel met with Andre Lapierriere (Protect Source), UNICEF,s Head of Northern Operations for Iraq. UNICEF contingency plans are based on providing emergency relief to more than 250,000 people, with 40 percent of that population being absorbed into the homes of local communities. UNICEF is concerned that, at present, pre-positioned commodities in northern Iraq will only meet 30 percent of the potential needs of 250,000 displaced people. Lapierriere identified the need for additional pre-positioning of blankets, tents, emergency supplies for hospitals, clothing for children, and water bladders. UNICEF Head of Northern Operations for Iraq indicated that if hostilities last longer than 30 days and/or more than 250,000 people are displaced, there will be significant food and medicine shortages in the three northern provinces of Dehuk, Irbil, and Sulaymaniyah.
End Summary

UNICEF Activities in Northern Iraq

2. (C) UNICEF,s role in northern Iraq focuses on the primary health care, shelter, and water and sanitation sectors. In the water and sanitation sector, UNICEF has installed more than 1,000 km of pipes and dug hundreds of wells throughout most of the three northern Iraqi provinces. UNICEF,s Head of Northern Operations for Iraq reported that 95 percent of the northern areas have access to potable water. In the primary health sector, UNICEF is focusing on providing medicine and technical support to health clinics in the three northern provinces of Dehuk, Irbil, and Sulaymaniyah.

3. (C) UNICEF reported that, based on a planning figure of 250,000 displaced during a potential conflict, only 30 percent of shelter needs (blankets, tents, etc.) have been pre-positioned in northern Iraq to date. This pre-positioned cache includes 50,000 blankets and an undefined number of cooking sets and tents. While UNICEF has the mechanism in place to pre-position, warehouse, and distribute non-food items in northern Iraq, UNICEF does not have additional funds available to do so. DART Field Office/North has identified UNICEF as the only international organization with the capacity to distribute non-food items in northern Iraq from Turkey. To date, no NGOs are registered with the Government of Turkey (GOT) to transit

humanitarian supplies.

14. (C) UNICEF,s Head of Northern Operations for Iraq indicated the United Nations Office of Project Services (UN OPS) has the jurisdiction over generators and power sources in northern Iraq. However, under the regulations of the Oil-for-Food program, UN OPS is unable to train local Iraqi,s on maintenance of these power systems. UNICEF Head of Northern Operations for Iraq in concerned that if the Oil-for-Food program is broken, the power supply system in northern Iraq could be in jeopardy.

15. (C) Lapierriere identified a need for local medical officials in northern Iraq to receive information on responding to a Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, or Explosion (CBRNE) attack. UNICEF,s Head of Northern Operations for Iraq indicated that a workshop for local staff on CBRNE in northern Iraq for first responders could calm concerns of the northern Iraqi population.

UNICEF,s Concerns

16. (C) UNICEF identified the need for additional non-food items to be pre-positioned in northern Iraq as soon as possible, including, in order of priority, more than 100,000 blankets, 1,000 tents, emergency supplies for hospitals, clothing for children, and water bladders. DART Field Office/North discussed the idea of pre-positioning emergency relief supplies, such as blankets, tents, etc., in northern Iraq with UNICEF. UNICEF indicated that they are in a position to facilitate the delivery of emergency relief supplies to warehouses in northern Iraq. Additionally, the availability of fuel for cooking and operating vehicles is a concern. If the Oil-for-Food program stops, local UNICEF staff will not receive salaries because of lack of funds, raising concerns of UNICEF,s ability to maintain its network of employees over a long period of time. UNICEF Field Representative indicated that if hostilities last longer than 30 days and/or more than 250,000 people are displaced, there will be significant food shortages in the three northern provinces.

17. (C) UNICEF, in consultation with U.N. Joint Logistics Center (UNJLC), has identified four logistical contingency plans to bring medicine to the people of northern Iraq in the event of hostilities. UNICEF,s first option is to transport medicine and emergency relief supplies by truck from the Turkish port of Mersin to the three northern provinces. UNICEF currently has \$4 million worth of emergency medicine in Mersin waiting transport to northern Iraq. If transport through Turkey becomes more problematic, then UNICEF contingency plans call for the medicine to be airlifted into secure locations in northern Iraq. In the event that airlifting medicine is not an option, UNICEF plans call for emergency relief supplies to be transported through Syria and Iran. UNICEF,s Field Representative reported that UNICEF personnel are currently conducting an assessment in Syria to assess conditions for transport from Syria to northern Iraq.

NGO Presence in Northern Iraq

18. (SBU) UNICEF,s Head of Northern Operations for Iraq identified eight international NGOs that have established programs in northern Iraq, as well as the sectors that they work in: Save the Children/United Kingdom (shelter, protection of IDPs), PeaceWinds Japan (health, water and sanitation), STEP (education), Yanconia (protection of IDPs), Premerogance (education), Qandil (water and sanitation, protection of IDPs), Mines Advisory Group (demining), and Response, Relief, Resettlement, and Rehabilitation (advocacy). According to UNICEF, all international staff for these organizations have been evacuated from northern Iraq. UNICEF representative singled out Save the Children/UK as having a significant presence in northern Iraq with knowledgeable local staff to conduct emergency response operations.

DART Field Office/North Requests for Action

19. (C) Request for Action. DART Field Office/North requests that additional international disaster assistance funds be made available to UNICEF for the pre-positioning of 50,000 blankets and 1,000 tents in northern Iraq

through Turkey. Additionally, DART Field Office/North requests that these commodities be purchased in Turkey as a visible indication to the GOT that the USG and international community is actively working on contingency plans to stabilize the northern Iraqi population in place, minimize movement of displaced persons, and reduce the potential humanitarian burden on the GOT.

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